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November 5, 1959

Chairman, Incentive Awards Committee

Re: Employee Suggestion CS-59-55. (CIA 2416)

The employee states that at the present time reimbursement for travel or liquidation of travel advances must be made or accounted for in strict compliance with Standardized Government Travel Regulations, agency regulations, Foreign Service Regulations, and/or Joint Travel Regulations, all of which have become voluminous, complex, difficult to implement, and costly.

He suggests that all laws or regulations be rescinded or amended, as required, to authorize, when feasible, all travel expenses to be obligated and accounted for on the basis of an approved travel order only. He believes this could be applied to civilian and military travel alike, whether on permanent or temporary change of station; and that it would eliminate the travel voucher in its entirety. The payment would be based on a World Travel Allowance Table from which an allowance for per diem and incidental expenses would be computed for travel to and from all points of the world. The cost of transportation would be added to the amount from the table and payment could be made before or after travel.

The employee estimates a savings to the Government of more than \$100,000,000 annually, based on the value of time involved in the preparation of travel vouchers by the employee, plus the administrative audit of same, and the post audit by the General Accounting Office.

The suggester further proposes that if the World Travel Allowance Table should prove too complex and/or costly to maintain, the same principles could be applied to a World Mileage Guide to cover all modes of transportation. He states the law might also permit the traveler to (a) choose his mode and class of travel, circumstances permitting, (b) claim per diem while on temporary duty under existing regulations before or after completion of travel, and (c) make final accounting on the basis of official notification that travel was completed as authorized.

While it appears some saving could be realized if travelers between large cities or military installations in the United States were paid a fixed amount depending on the mode of transportation, the plan is not so simple when projected on the scale envisioned by the employee. Compiling a World Travel Allowance Table to include per diem and

Review of this document by CIA has determined that:

☒ CIA has no objection to declass

☐ It contains information of CIA

interest that must remain

secret

Authority: HR 10-2

☐ It contains nothing of CIA interest

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incidental expenses by each separate mode of transportation, to and from any point in the world, would be an almost impossible task. For example, the Rand McNally Standard Highway Mileage Guide shows approximately 240,000 mileage distances from 625 key points in the United States and Canada. Therefore, as many as 240,000 different rates would be required in the table if only 625 key points were covered for only one mode of travel. Increasing the number of key points and destinations on a world-wide basis and establishing separate rates for each mode of travel (air, rail, water, bus, and automobile) would require compiling and maintaining a staggering number of allowance rates. Frequent revision would be required because of changes in common carrier schedules. Then too, adjusting the amount including for per diem would be difficult because the elapsed time could vary via the same mode of transportation. Adding the actual cost of transportation by airlines, steamship, railroad, or bus, to the amount due would require every Government establishment to have specialized personnel to maintain world-wide passenger tariffs to determine the proper rate in each case.

Since the employee suggests that the proposed method be used "where feasible" two methods of payment would be required. In cases when the proposed method is not feasible, as for instance between points not covered by the table, payment apparently would be made under present laws and regulations, or by some method prescribed under new laws.

The alternate plan, involving the use of a World Mileage Guide is similar to the Official Table of Distances published by the Chief of Finance, Department of Army, for use when members of the uniformed services are authorized to travel on a mileage basis upon permanent change of station. It does not appear practicable, however, to establish one rate per mile to cover transportation, per diem, and incidentals for use by all travelers on a world-wide basis regardless of the mode of transportation used or the time spent en route. This would be especially true in travel to and from overseas locations by steamship or air.

Even if it were demonstrated that it would be practicable to prepare and maintain a World Travel Allowance Table or a World Mileage Guide, and the payment on that basis would be equitable, we believe the complexities involved would result in greater cost in processing payments than under the present system. Further, elimination of the travel voucher and making payment on the travel order and a request for payment executed by the traveler would simply substitute one accounting document for another. This would be particularly true when temporary duty is involved since the time of arrival and departure at temporary duty points would be required in order to support payments of per diem while there because the proposed methods of payment relate only to travel en route.

A savings in audit costs would be realized only if the payments were established by law as a non-accountable allowance for travel. Our Office would be unable to recommend legislation to accomplish that end, particularly on a world-wide basis for all persons authorized to travel at Government expense.

Therefore, while the employee should be thanked for his effort to simplify an admittedly complex field of law, we do not recommend adoption of his suggestion.

15/  
General Counsel